

Closed Caption Log, Council Work Session, 05/24/11

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mairks mayor again, i want --

Mayor Leffingwell: Again, I want to recognize international visitor in our audience, shal la, who goes by the name peter. He is from china. He is an attorney and civil servant and he is here to observe the democratic process. So let's give him a good show. [Applause] the other thing I want to mention very briefly, council meeting on thursday, before we convene the meeting there's going to be a slight add-on to our invocation. In fact, it will be a memorial day day ceremony, which I estimate will take about 20 to 25 minutes. At the beginning of the meeting before we call to order. So I wanted to let you know that. So a quorum is present, so I'll call this austin city council work session to order. On tuesday, may 24th, 2011. At 9:07 a.m. We're meeting in the boards and commissions room, austin city hall, 301 west second street, austin, texas. And we will begin with item b-1, which is an item to approve a resolution canvassing the results of the may 14th, 2011 municipal elections. And before we entertain a motion, is there anyone in the audience who would like to be heard on this item? Hearing and seeing no one, I'll first read the resolution and then we'll entertain a motion on that resolution. the returns of the general election show that in the race for plays one, josia james ingalls received 1,936 votes. Chris riley received 20,146 votes. Roger chan received 7,373 votes. And no could beson received 1,134 votes. In the race for place, kathy tovo received 14,849 votes. Michael max nofziger received 4,565 votes. Chris bailey received 2,070 votes. And r received 10,534 votes. In the race for place 4, lauraorrison received 22,033 votes. Eric rangal received 5,723 votes and kay toby ryan hill received 2,516 votes. Chris riley received a majority of all votes cast for the office of city council place 1. Laura morrison received a majority of all votes cast for the office of city council place 4. Of the two candidates who received the highest number of votes cast for city council place 3, randi shade and kathy tovo, neither candidate received a majority of all votes cast for city council place 3, there by requiring a runoff election for place 3. So that is the resolution. I'll entertain a motion for approval.

So moved.

Councilmember riley makes the motion. Councilmember shade seconds that motion. Is there any discussion? All in favor say aye? Any opposed say no. That masses on a vote -- that passes on a vote o seven to zero. And council will now take up item number b-2, which is to approve the waiver of the deadline requirements and the closure notice which allows affected individuals and neighborhood associations to object to the closure under city code chapter 14-8 for the sign sine die, as we say here in texas. Sine die is the correct latin pronunciation, sponsored by the mexican-american legislative caucus, which is to be held wednesday may 25th, 2011 from 12 noon until 12 midnight on west 13th between colorado and lavaca streets and on colorado street between 12th and 13th street. So that is the item. And I'll entertain a motion for approval.

Move approval.

Mayor Leffingwell: Mayor pro tem proofs approval. Seconded by councilmember cole. Discussion? All in favor say aye. Opposed say no? It passes on a vote of seven to zero. So my suggestion, council, is that we go into executive session and then come back and address the remainder of our agenda. Without

objection, we'll proceed in that way. So without objection the council will go into closed session to take up one item, 071 of the government code, the city council will discuss with legal counsel regarding the following one item: Item d-1 to discuss legal issues relating to dominique chavez, alfred stanley and michael levy. The city of austin city councilmembers lee leffingwell, mayor, chris riley, place -- I believe that's an error, should read place 1. Mike martinez place 2 and mayor pro tem randi shade place 3, laura morrison place 4, bill spelman place 5 and cheryl cole place 6. Is there any objection to going into executive session on the item announced? Hearing none, the council will now go into executive session.

we are out of closed session, in closed session we took having to discuss legal issues related to item d1. Council will take up the next item on our agenda which is a briefing, discussion and overview of departmental conditions including urine estimates, et cetera, item number c1. Welcome.

Thank you, mayor, ed vaneno, budget officer. This item is from a council resolution that was approved earlier that established additional work budget work sessions leading up to budget adoption. The first one scheduled for may 10th, the austin water utility were scheduled to present on that date. We ran out of time on that date so those two departments were not able to present but they did provide you on that day their presentation materials. We have not been able to reschedule the meetings because the tuesday work sessions between now and i believe until up until the budget is scheduled to come to council on july 27 are already completely full of agendas. We have other departments that are already scheduled to present on those dates so what we had told council is that those departments would be available today and if there are any questions for the water utility or solid waste services department in regard to the presentation materials they provided to you, that they would be here today. So what I would like to suggest is that we first talk about the water utility and solid waste services, if there are any questions from council about the presentation materials that provided to you two weeks ago. Those departments are here, prepared to respond to your questions. If there aren't any questions, then we can move on to the departments that are here and prepared to present today, which is our planning and development review department, our fire department, and our police department.

Any questions?

Thank you, mayor. And I have substantial questions for the water utility but I am not prepared to ask them right now because I want to lay them out in a logical way and did not look to the boasting language and was under impression we were talking about three other departments today. I am not prepared to ask those questions today. Is it possible to make the same deal having solid and waste services people at the same work session, even though we are not posted for full briefing on those certainly, we can put them to a future meeting.

If we can do that at a future meeting went we are actually having a discussion on those subject, as an opportunity, I would like to ask some questions and have that discussion but I only not prepared to do that in any kind of reasonable way right now.

And our thought was given the time constraints we are having getting these briefings scheduled, instead of the departments doing another briefing they provided their briefing materials to you and they would be here to respond to questions.

Sure. I think it's perfectly appropriate but we were not posted for solid and water services so I wasn't prepared for that.

So we will start off with the planning department, then.

Okay.

Good morning, mayor and council, I am greg ernzy and joined by lasa anythingkel and my financial

manager, sue edwards and the city manager. I am here today to give you an overview of the department's conditions and included the year-end estimates, the horizon issues, unmet needs, key performance and also reviewing the financial -- the financial data for years i will present the results of the fyi annual -- '10 annual performance report. You received earlier in year, pdrs, horizon issues, unmet service demands and some of the potential budget reductions. Let me begin with the financial data. In fy '10, there was variance of half million dollars between the current year and the estimate and the actual. Couple the examples for this variance to the cye included 150,000 for literally a sinking street in the robert mueller municipal airport project that didn't occur, so didn't get charged for that. It also included 118,000 for automatic vehicle location or avl or air cards, which we did not incur. We also entered into a new contract for concrete testing in fy '10 that was overestimated and there is notification for printing, postage, mail distribution, advertising. We are also overestimated by about \$54,000. In fy '11 our primary savings is due to vacancy savings and it's anticipated in fy '12, there is about \$796,000 for personnel increases and miscellaneous increases that related to maintenance and fuel charges and that accounts for about 83,000. Our horizon issues, which primarily there are five that I will address today. The first is our imagine austin comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan will, you know, change some of our demands on staff to perform annual review which is mandate and also a five-year evaluation and appraisal reports and this may actually result in some more revisions, major revisions or at least plan amendments. The plan will are trigger the need to rewrite the code and supporting criteria manuals which could cost between 1 and \$2 million. Cost of service study which we are excited about, is underway and will bring that back to you later this summer with a presentation of our findings on the -- it may actually assist the department in covering some revenue that is currently lost to maintain current service levels. One stop shop audit. We continue to devote staff time and resources to the audit. Some of the updates that we have made as a result of the audit and put time into, we have updated our departmental website. We are are also working with wpdr to finalize the academy -- land development academy to train citizens and staff on our development process. We added a technical review for one and two family residential buildings and also, very soon, will providing electronic notification filing of application for site plan, board adjustment and sign review board. Under information technology and capital needs and technical support, over the next few years, staff will support, the test, and train on ongoing improvements that have result fraud policy changes you approve and system updates to our man the system. Our new update web system or man the 5 will start next year and it will challenge us to make transition to the new systems that seamless and minimizes disruption to our development process. You call it, it was a rather strenuous effort to bring up the current demanded system. We are hopeful it will be less strenuous this time around. Municipal utility districts seem to be possible. We had renewed interest in them. Pilot knob, rita davita and southwest county muds 1, 2, 3, 4 and they require additional staff time to review the mud documents, basically documents that create them and also we anticipate the that the review of applications for projects within the mud boundaries will take additional time, because each of these m.u.d. Agreements are typically unique so we have to apply unique standards for them. We basically haven't had a es in particular that have been created the last 25 years so this is something relatively new. Let me talk a little bit about our annual performance report, pdr did not meet our target on three key performance measures. We did meet it on the other two. The first is percent of inspections performed in 24 hours. Our target for fy '09 and '10 was 95% and actual was about 90%. The percent of commercial building plan reviews completed in the land development code mandated 21 days. We are meeting our target about 80% was the target and 60% was our actual and on time initial reviews should improve in fy '11 because we added two technical reviewers and also added additional staff. Our target was 70 and we are actually at 65. So now let me address our unmet service demand. First let me address the inspections performed in 24 hours. This thursday you will be considering a new minimum life safety amnesty ordinance called fairview neighborhood which will require new preinspection in order to evaluate the requirements to be in compliance with our land development code. This would actually probably take two additional inspectors. In the near future you will also be considering updates to our national electric code of 2011nec department will need to create a special electric -- special inspection program. This will require time specific inspections that we would also create similar to the new life safety inspection program. The current plumbing and mechanical change-out program is backlogged approximately 3 months. Our unmet needs were part of additional forecast for the additional inspector for the change-out program. As I mentioned two inspectors for the life safety program and two for the electrical program. Second I will talk a little bit about the commercial

plan review. Although the plans examiner is submitted as part of our potential reduction list, we also requested new plan examiners for quick turn around, quick turn around is a service we offer in our department two days a week. Basically it allows an individual come into our office and get plan approved on quicker basis. If someone is moving into a an existing tenant space so particularly small businesses and large businesses if they are locating within a space could take advantage of this. Technology upgrades. As I mentioned before, we have the manned to five assessment starting this summer and testing of the new amanda system will begin in fy '12 and it require new training for the system, developed for external and internal stakeholders that would use the amanda system process and we also have a business systems analysis requested as part of our -- basically our unmet needs to help with this service demand. Some other things that are not on this list that I have on the screen, I just wanted to mention, due to recent changes to the -- our tree ordinance, our demand for tree permits and inspections has grown. A as you recall when we approved the program, staff only asked for one position. We actually only need two. This funding would come from the urban force replenishment fund so it would be a direct hit to our general fund. Finally, let me get to my last slide. As part of our proposed budget, we are asked to look at potential budget reductions. The reductions that we could offer are as follows, in their land use review areas there, would be supervising engineer and then four positions that are -- that were -- would be removed from the austin water utility funding. These would include planner one, environmental specialist, environmental reviewer and engineer c. From comprehensive planning area, we would have a planner 3 and a senior planner. From urban design area, there would be money principal planner, development assistant center, one senior planner. From inspections there would be two site subdivision inspector cs. These are inspectors that look at the actual improvements that are made in the subdivision, not necessarily inspections that relate to a building permit but for like detention ponds and things like that. Plan review for a plans examiner and finally under contractuals, concrete testing and this would cut our budget about one fourth. As you recall earlier in my presentation, that we have a new contract. New subdivisions are down so we are actually proposing to cut about one fourth of the moneys that as local located for that which is approximately \$486,000 today. So if you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them at this time. i have a quick time. The horizon issues, i believe you said the comprehensive plan was about a million dollar item?

There is an item that would naturally follow the implementtation of a comprehensive plan and that's where you update all of your codes and regulations to implement the plan.

I guess I am trying to figure out, especially in light of this last slide here, the potential save -- would there be potential savings by postponing the implementation or coming up the ordinances to implement the comprehensive plan in the next fiscal year?

Well, we are actually talking about further out in fy '13. that was my question. Horizon, what does that mean?

That is looking out beyond the current budget we are working on, maybe 1-five years going out, and so - but this next year, is there any part of that to be --

well, we are still working on current comprehensive plan so we need to finish that before we actually start having discussion about the implementation of the ordinances. so on the current comprehensive plan, are there any savings to be achieved by delaying implementation of that?

I would say it would be best to try to actually implement the plan still as soon as we can so that we can - but are there any savings to be achieved? That would be profitable to laying people off?

No. all right. Any other questions?

Greg, on that same page about horizon issues, you mentioned -- or maybe it was the previous one, you mentioned electronic notification. Could you elaborate on that? What notifications are you talking about?

Right now, there is a project when they became director of the one stop shop combined with the planning and zoning department, Victoria Lee initiated with CTM some improvements to provide for electronic notification, so when application is filed we send out notice to property owners right now and basically utility customers and neighborhood organizations of a filing of an application for subdivisions site plan. Currently there is actually no notices that provided filing for board of adjustment variance. So part of that, this is to roll out the first phase is to send out electronic notification to the neighborhood organizations within their boundaries of applications of these types so they will be noticed earlier. There is little cost to the city. We would actually do this as part of the filing of the application and we are preparing to send out mail notice and we would also do an electronic notice, so the specific applications for the first phase, site plan applications, administrative and approved by the commission -- like zoning and platting commission, zoning applications, administrative applications that are approved and the land use commission approval and for board of adjustment and sign and review boards.

So can we manage to cut back on the written notifications that we mail?

Unfortunately, probably not. A lot of the applications that we have are required by certain state laws to provide a notice. So if you have board of adjustment hearing, you are required to provide mailed notice to property owners and prior ordinances we go above and beyond what is required maybe of state law to provide notice beyond 200 feet which might be called by state law. We go to 500 feet by board of adjustment notice.

Assistant city manager. One of the things the neighborhoods had asked for right now when we make an administrative decision about a site plan, if it is administrative site plan, there is no way for anyone else to know it so one of the reasons that this came about to begin with was to begin to help the general public know when administrative site plans and other administrative types of issues are met and so this just really gives an additional notice that was never there before to the neighborhoods.

And it also provides ability for, with the parties and neighborhood organizations to speak with the applicant, if they choose not to contact neighborhood organizations in advance, it gets together quicker, so there is not as much confusion about what is proposed in an application.

So if I am just a resident in a neighborhood and I am concerned about a development project on a particular site, is there a way for me to go to the project information page and opt in to electronic notification about developments in that case?

It's mainly set up for neighborhood organization unless you have registered yourself for neighborhood organization, no. It is mainly to help the neighborhood organizations which typically, most of them have an email list already and they send that out.

Right. So they -- they, on a case by case basis, can they opt in or --

yes, they will be able to opt in and they can opt out if they so chose to, if that neighborhood organization did not want to receive all of the email notices as well.

Okay. Is there any hope of coordinating with utility to allow customers to opt in to electronic notifications? Right now, I occasionally will get notices. They always come in bundles of three, I get three of the exact same notice when they arrive. They are all mailed out separately, paid for by the city and it just seems -- and I would be happy to get those notices electronic which would save trees and you think there would be cost savings there, if some point, through the utility perhaps I could opt in and say I would like to receive electronic -- I would like to receive notifications electronically. It seems like long-term that would be for initial of handling notifications and save money.

I think we always look to find ways to try to save money in combining notices. I know my predecessors

have looked at ways, if your utility bill and your tax address are the same, we actually reduce number of notices. If they are slightly different in how you are listed on the tax roll and how you are listed as a utility customer, you may actually receive two notices for that particular application. We haven't been able to reduce that number, but what we have done in the last year or two where we have a commission notice and a council notice for hearing and sometimes you experience postponements on your agenda, we have combined those notices so we actually save on postage and mail-out time to combine commission and mail out notices together and if the commission wants more time to look at an application, say, for zoning application, you have postponement so we have been able to save money on those types of notices. but i think your question was, chris, can people choose to have electronic notification. And the answer is any legally required notification has to be hard copy, paper?

That's correct. and there -- and I know municipalities all over the state have been seeking relief or change to that but so far -- it was probably brought up in this session. I don't think anything has been done. You can supplement. You can have an electronic notification, but that does not substitute for the required hard copy notification, whether that be mailed to you personally or posted in the local newspaper, et cetera.

I understand why the default would be written notifications is always required but if a customer voluntarily opts in to electronic notifications, you would think that that would be something that any governmental entity would embrace. [Laughter]

but I understand that's a state law issue. you are welcome to try to make that case, council member. [Laughter] laura.

Thanks, I want to thank you on the electronic notification and I don't know how many years ago laura huffman, the neighborhood was working with them and it was something in the heritage neighborhood association, remember that case that was up there and that was one of the outcomes that it really would make sense to start doing electronic notifications so i understand for organizations signed up as neighborhood associations on the community registry and for people within those boundaries, the legal requirement is to give them notice by paper, so -- but is there a way -- and i think chris was sort of maybe already asked this but is there a way that individuals can sign up online as interested parties to something or others that going on and then as a individual get included in any notices of, say, for instance a site plan.

We can certainly look at that. Right now the answer is there is not a way right now. We do have online where you can go into our gis database and see projects that are around you and that's something that is relatively new. I think that we implemented last year, but we do not currently have the ability to give you a notice of those applications that are filed for an individual.

Morrison: I think that's one of the things that has come up, that instead of, if somebody is interested, say, in the cases around them and they know one in particular they would like to be informed of, rather than having to check every day and that's an issue that has come up a couple of times on a couple of cases, rather than having to check every day if there is a change if you can sign up as interested party and be notified, maybe something to put on the wish list.

We can look at that. Right now the neighborhood organizations would have that ability with this process for those three types of applications.

Morrison: If we could move towards individuals being able to opt in to notices, we will get fewer community organizations signing up because I know at least one person that signed up as a community organization with just, you know, their property and that's not really something we need to encourage. It would be more effective but I understand it would be more complicated technology wise. I just wanted to ask in general about the performance report and we have 6 different performance targets listed here. And I know if you delve into the budget documents, there are a whole lot of different performance

requirements in there. So are these sort of your top level -- and as we are getting started in this kind of process, I just want to understand how things are laid out.

These are the key ones that you would normally find for my department. These are headliners, I should say.

Okay. Do we have any information on -- on, say, what -- do other cities use these as key targets and how have these changed? And I think having some contacts for these could be helpful and city manager, this is really sort of maybe a more general thing that we might think about in terms of understanding where we are. Are we headed in the right direction even if we hadn't met all of the targets?

We can certainly get back with you. I don't have an answer for you today but we can follow up with you.

Morrison: Right and I think maybe we can put our heads together as what will be helpful information in general as the departments start presenting performance reports, thanks.

You did mention we publish every month a monthly report of building permit activity, new remodel site plans, is subdivision activity, it doesn't compare us to other jurisdictions but it is a monitor, just like building personals are about 14% up from last year and we can track that from month to month so we do have that online and available to the public.

And it does give a lot more detail -- does give you context for which you can tell whether we are doing better or not better.

Morrison: Right, right. And I am just thinking, for instance, percent of inspections performed within 24 hours of request, is one that we didn't meet but it would be interesting to know what -- where we were last year? Are we in worst shape or better shape?

Right. There you can actually see that through time, on that particular spot.

Morrison: Right. I see that.

If we can bring that back up.

Morrison: It's there. I see. And then in terms of whether that is a reasonable target, understanding how other cities do on that but the that may be hard because it clearly is not the same target.

I think our inspectors do something a little different than other cities do which you get more bang for your buck, I guess as a citizen in Austin. Because a lot of inspectors we combine inspections when look at sites, they may look at plumbing, mechanical building all at the same time. So we may go out to the site with one inspector but they might be doing multiple reviews because they cross train for those different disciplines and you might not find that in other jurisdictions.

Morrison: Right. Sounds like good efficiency. We started doing that a few years ago. It is a good innovation, Bill.

We follow up with this that a little bit because you strike me as being exactly the right headliners. There is probably a lot of details that need to go into that and I need to ask you a couple of questions. If we are hitting 20% of our inspections within 24 hours, I am guessing that is probably not 90% of the inspection, some were getting 100% in 24 hours and some were backlogged on. I thought I heard you say we were

backlogged on plumbing and mechanical inspections, right?

There is a particular type. We offer in austin a special inspection program for mechanical -- plumbing mechanical and that really is from our, like an air conditioning system and you want to come out and instead of having -- we will be out there sometime today for a time inspection and so instead of having an inspection that might be able to do a multiple inspection a day at their leisure of their schedule, a time inspection that will be 00 o'clock for this particular time do that type of inspection. That type of inspection is very popular, particularly if the homeowner is involved, because then we are out there on that hour. So we might be only able to do maybe six or seven of those in a day, as only posed to a regular inspection, where the inspector actually goes out and maybe able to do maybe more than that, maybe a dozen or more within that time period, and that's the particular program that we have.

Spelman: Why is it we set particular appointments, 00 o'clock to do thus and such? And we can't do it in a more flexible way? Because those aren't construction projects?

It has the to do with making sure -- inspector has a territory which they have. They might be able to have a jobs that nearby and they set their schedules as the inspection requests come in. This is actually an inspection schedule that's set up in advance and so they actually will plot out their particular schedule on that day. So it's like making -- making that reservation, so it's a little bit different program. It's very high demand because this is something that people want, to be time certain.

Okay.

Council member, you asked why we did that and whether we had to. We really do not have to but we offer it as a customer service.

Spelman: Okay.

It is somewhat unique to the city of austin.

And we do have ordinances that speak to this and two of the positions -- or actually I should say four of the positions that are under unmet service demands would actually address this as well. When we start talking a about the minimum life safety inspections, the preinspections, the homeowner will certainly -- will probably be the one they will encounter and the inspector won't probably be a contractor necessarily that come out to do the general assessment.

Spelman: Sure.

And they would kind of like that certainty of having that inspection. The electrical program, the electrical special inspection program, as we get the new energy efficient vehicles -- electric vehicles and you want to put that heavy duty outlet in your garage, well a lot of people don't want to say, well, sometime between 8 and 5 today we will be there, they want to -- certainly to come in so the demand for these type of inspections is much higher than you might have. And people might be willing to wait a longer period of time to get that inspection because they know you will be there on that time.

Spelman: It seems like we are dealing with two different kind of availables, one is I have a construction project. I am at the electrical system in face at construction, I need someone to look at electrical system so I can put my drywall up, that is one class. And then a different class entirely where you are talking about now where i can schedule. So maybe this performance measure shouldn't be applied to both classes of inspections. We are much more worried about being able to put up my drywall expeditiously and a new construction project than getting somebody to look at my 220 plug within 24 hours. Does that make sense?

This that does make sense.

Spelman: Is that something that we can -- i am not sure I want to -- if we held the 24 hours of requests to the things which we really need to get within 24 hours, then I think we have a fairer measure for how well we are actually doing. It seems to me we aren't losing much customer satisfaction to scheduling the 220 whole inspections for three days hence rather than 24 hours.

Council we will look at the performance measure and see if there is a way we can break these apart.

Spelman: Okay. But scheduling issue with respect to last couple you were talking about that doesn't require additional staff cross-training or change in practices? That is proceeding fine. We don't have a customer satisfaction problem with that. It just takes longer than 24 hours to get to people. Is that an accurate statement?

The time period with which we get out there to do these timed inspections has been lagging for plumbing and mechanical. Right now if you are talking about three months out, that is a long time out.

Spelman: Yes.

So what this would suggest is trying to move us up a little quicker so we get out there with time certain inspection instead of being three months behind and also, the other two programs are not in existence yet but we know there will be demand for these, particularly for the minimum life safety one. That is part of our demand we anticipate that is coming and part of my unmet needs that I am coming before you.

Spelman: Within 24 hours of request suggest they are all on the same playing field and if some of these things are lagged by three months in that 10% where we are not being within 24 hours, if not, we are not being within hundreds of hours.

We would meet within 24 hours because we will say we will be there at that hour on that day but it's three months out. As opposed you call for inspection and we strive to, 95% of our inspections you call day and we will be there within 24 hours, that's what we are striving.

Spelman: If there is a way to separate those two and make it clearer, I think it will be helpful. With respect to the other two, we are behind on commercial planning building reviews, similarly we are behind on initial new residential zoning reviews on time, and I think I heard you say that you were talking about adding staff to cover the initial residential reviews.

The residential reviews, it is important to note that we probably added five staff and because of mcmansion, because of our hmcads, the regulations, conforming and nonconforming, remodels conforming versus nonconforming, there is training periods to bring staff up.

Spelman: Okay.

And initially about two years ago, we actually had a lot of people leaving that section, going to other departments within the city or resigning to take other positions outside of the city, and so we have been in kind of a rebuilding mode. So I anticipate that will actually probably improve. We are actually making some minor technical improvements right now where the technical review by itself are really to help those homeowners who are struggling with mcmansion, struggling with hmcads and we are in the process right now of making -- for remodeling, almost like a completeness check review so you are coming in and people aren't waiting there an hour to turn in application. They can drop off application. We will do the review and get back to you. So there are minor improvements that are not explained here that we are doing that I think will benefit that and that will come back and those times will come up but the other two areas are concerns, particular commercial plan review, as our economy gets going and we get more

people moving in, those are people that I've got a business -- I am a small business person. It's taking me longer to get my application. Yet, they can't get into the quick turn around that becomes more of an issue.

Spelman: Right. And you said permits up 14% over the last year or two?

In general, that's correct.

Spelman: Okay. Some of that is going to be commercial permits?

That's right and the majority of the ones that are having residential and commercial are all remodel and renovation. There may not be a lot of new construction but we have a lot of people coming in and doing finish outs of existing spaces or remodeling existing spaces and those are the things that you really want to see people filling up and filling these empty buildings and getting those people online quick.

Spelman: Quicker is better especially the lag may cause people to go elsewhere or rethink their expansion.

We don't want them to go elsewhere.

Spelman: Exactly. What can we do to bring the 69% up to the highest level possible?

As I mentioned there is unmet service demand to improve quick turn around times of people coming in.

Spelman: Part of that service demand?

Yes and that's why I asked for a new position. Certainly in the positions for the reductions, I have to look at the department as a whole and make sure that we are providing a level of service that pretty much matches the demand that we have, and so it's kind of -- I am asking for one but I am putting one on the table at the same time and that is a difficult balancing game.

Spelman: Well it sounds like you are putting one on the table and asking for one. That is even better but last year you hit 69% around the 80% you had in mind and permits have gone up. So it sounds to me like unless you can change your procedures to match the increase in demand you are going to fall further behind.

Possibly, yes.

Spelman: What would it take not to fall further behind? Is there a change in practice or policy or increase in staff?

We are looking at internally our practice, via the audit and via actually just general discussions about process improvement. But I think there is probably a combination of several different things. One is the land use academy that we are talking about, and when that actually comes up, I think that will be beneficial both to the community and the staff. Two, I think maybe the cost of service study that will actually get some general information that may provide relief in there. It is too preliminary actually to be sure. But I think three, there may be a simple change that might actually help -- one, I was talking to a customer the other day of moving quick turn around days that may actually address it, because part of it is they come in on Monday and Wednesday and simply changing it to Tuesday and Thursday, we avoid some of the national holidays and that little change may actually make an improvement, so we are

looking at that right now, maybe possibly moving it over.

And the quick turn around, has this been around a year or longer than a year.

It has been a while. We are trying to get people in and out and a quick. Usually they are projects that are not that complicate but it is an area where people are more in demand because are moving into existing tenant spaces.

Spelman: That is the increase of permits you are actually seeing right now.

Yes.

Spelman: And there is more use of that program and all else equal will cause numbers of people getting what they want within 21 days?

That's right.

Spelman: There is a way of focusing more attention to that and perhaps let the other lie a little bit to get people through as quickly as possible, especially that kind of permit. That might be a good use of ..

Right and that actually goes back again to our performance measure so if i can meet those times and quick are turnarounds, that will help.

Spelman: Right. But you have artfully avoided answering the question. I appreciate this, but I do want to try to nail you down a little bit, greg. Can you reasonably expect to get to 80% within 21 days of the commercial permits with the current staff?

I think it would be I think I still need one more person to really get there. The number of staff -- and i would have to go back and look and I can certainly follow up with you -- staff really hasn't changed that significantly in this area, Especially the lag may cause people to go elsewhere or rethink their expansion.

We don't want them to go elsewhere.

Spelman: Exactly. What can we do to bring the 69% up to the highest level possible?

As I mentioned there is unmet service demand to improvement quick turn around times of people coming in.

Spelman: Part of that service demand?

Yes and that's why i asked for a new position. Certainly in the positions for the reductions, I have to look at the department as a whole and make sure that we are providing a level of service that pretty much matches the demand that we have, and so it's kind of -- I am asking for one but I am putting one on the table at the same time and that is a difficult balancing game.

Spelman: Well it sounds like you are putting one on the the table and asking for one. That is even steven but last year you hit 69% around the 80% you had in mind and permits have gone up. So it sounds to me like unless you can change your procedures to match the increase in demand you are going to fall further behind.

Possibly, yes.

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I think it would be I think I still need one more person to really get there. The number of staff -- and i would have to go back and look and I can certainly follow up with you -- staff really hasn't changed that significantly in this area, although we have grown tremendously in 10, 15 so it is a little different situation and our competition has grown within our metropolitan area, so those businesses that can locate just outside of our boundaries in another municipality, they may think twice. I talked to pizza owner and part of what he does is expanding his franchise and it's difficult, he said, for us to maybe compete with round rock or cedar park and they all look at those jurisdictions if they can still make their dollars coming into our jurisdiction because it takes a while to go through the process. Those might not be quick turn around either. They may be a normal review because you have a normal kitchen.

Greg is being tactful, to make the 80%, it takes all of these things to make it happen.

Spelman: That the practices and policies by itself won't be efficient.

Right.

Spelman: That's what i needed to know.

Mayor.

Mayor leffingwell: Before you ask your questions, council, would your preference to be to take a break for lunch and come back in the afternoon or work straight through?

I prefer to take a break. There is a big brothers big luncheon that I will be going to. we will see what we look at 11:30, then. Sheryl.

Following up on the idea that we do want to compete with round rock and cedar park just like we compete around the world, I want to ask you about the unmet service demands and your request for technology upgrades. I am trying to figure out if they would help in any way in addition to the things that you have laid out, policies and procedures and staff that you didn't put on table that would help us compete for businesses.

Well, probably the most important position as part of technology is a request for business systems analyst. Someone who can come in and really look at our process department wide of making improvements. Especially as we move to the new amanda system, we want someone that can have kind of a broad overview of this. Right now, I have staff, some of which are on the verge of retirement, that are very familiar with the current amanda system, but if I lose a couple of of key people, it may make it a little bit more uncomfortable moving into a new amanda system because i don't have that history there that the folks that were there that created that, especially in the art of testing, when -- when you create a new program, the outdoor music venue, and we've got to quickly put something in place for amanda to respond, i actually take people away from certain functions they are doing right now to try to devote to this so we can get something online quickly. And so the demand that comes in my door for, let's say outdoor music venue permit that we can react as quickly as you anticipate us to and so I want to make sure that we with maintain that ability to do the quick turnarounds so from a technology standpoint, that's probably really important and that's probably the item that's under that. That probably under the items I have for the unmet service demand, that is probably the biggest one. We are still working through the electronic plan reviews that will reduce paperwork from flowing from the customer to the city and back and we are continuing working through right now.

When you talk about information technology capital needs, are you referring to something that we can actually fund through bonds? I am only picking up on the capital word?

I think the capital equipment may be the monitors and the computer.

Cole: That will be part of the needs assessment that we go through the city for the related --

it will be part of it. There may be some other demands.

If I may just add. I don't think we tackled technology needs in the bond program. Is that correct, greg.

That's correct.

So we looked for other sources in terms of the -- your adoption of the budget of 2012 to fund any kind of technology related needs.

Cole: Okay. I guess I have two concerns and I will direct these to the city manager. One is, like I've already mentioned the competition with the surrounding jurisdictions, it doesn't make sense for us to be going through a rigorous process to compete around the world and we are losing tax base to surrounding jurisdictions. We want to do both. And if we are losing that tax base and it is directly related to our ability to complete the development review process in a timely manner, then we need to consider what it would take to make that faster, and we would like to kind of see that on the table because I often know that I am a part of passing a resolution and I consider what impact it has on planning and review and that process and I think it would be helpful, maybe for the retreat, just to have some sense of that, of what we really should be thinking about putting in the budget to make -- to get in that, even if it's over a three-year period or a five-year period and, second, I know that we have talked about the amanda system and we have talked about it in the context of open records and the archiving process and I know that that is going to be needed city wide and potentially for all employees and so we need to think about capital needs for that as we consider a bond program. I don't want to take the extent to which we can issue bonds or technology needs that are so critical to our tax base or complying with laws off the table.

I certainly think it is a worthy conversation for sort of an annual kind of discussion we are talking about, having now, and certainly council knows that the development review process is very complicated and has been in every city that I have been in. It is even more so here because we -- we have so many stipulations and things that people have to go through in regard to development. So the solution, ultimately, is complex and won't simply be resolved with respect to additional staff nor technology, from that standpoint. I think we've got to look at some of the ordinances and other regulations associated with, you know, the department review process, what we require. And that complicates the process as well and this council knows, that changes on a fairly regular basis, at least that has been my experience since I have been here. So I think it is a worthy conversation for us to have at that time.

Perhaps I know council member Riley has been involved with the form based code and that is kind of part of the solution, so that should be on the table for discussion at our retreat to the extent to which it would add to our tax base.

Certainly, I look forward to that. It's good. I look forward to that discussion, also, but I think when we start having that discussion, one of the things we are going to have to face up to is a large part, if not a large majority of the complexity of the code, the blame for that stops right here. Most of that is council-initiated requirements, like being mentioned, et cetera.

Yes.

Mayor Leffingwell: okay. Anything else? All right. Thank you very much.

Thank you. I guess now we will go to the police department. Welcome.

All right. Good morning, mayor, council and city manager. Okay. Are you ready. I am ready, ready if you are.

All right. The clicker. Here we go. Good morning, again, art acevado, chief of place, with me is Alice Hooter, assistant director and I would call her a chief financial officer, obviously my boss, chief McDonald. The first slide here is the source of funding for police department, 91% of our budget is general fund with 2% including grant funding which currently we have approximately 30 grants we manage at the department with a very small staff which makes me very proud of them. Our expense refunds total about 5% of our budget and that includes billing services to the airport, special events,

some our homeland security reimbursement and municipal court reimbursements and 2% is asset forfeiture. Our funding that we use, if you look at this slide, about 51% of our budget is based policing which includes patrol, neighborhood detectives and parks. Another big part is 15% that is operations support which includes air operations, communications, airport special operations, forensics, victim services, planning, records, around, and the booking in our local which we will talk about in the next slide. We also spend about 7% of our budget on highway enforcement. We are proud of that because last year we received 16% low in traffic fatalities and every one of those are preventable. We were just named the second highest speed trap in the nation. I want to work to be number one. We have a reputation to slow down, the city of austin. I think that's a good thing. People know when they hit austin, they are working the operations and they slow down and a lot is funded by our grant funding. Investigations is another big chunk of our enforcement, our pie, use of funds which is about 13% and that includes centralized organized crime, homicide, robbery, property crimes, high-tech career criminal unit, missing persons, human trafficking, auto theft and again, very proud of homicide and the users -- especially homicide with one of the highest clearance rates in the country and professional division which includes recruitment, internal affairs, risk management and that takes up about 6%. Finally we have our support services which includes public information office, finance, human resources, ctm, purchasing, vehicles equipment facilities and our mail costs. The next slide, it kind of goes down to really show you that about, out of our entire budget, we really only have about 5% that's not salaries and benefits. However, that goes to 10% when you look at the fact that you get some of our reimbursements, so we about about 10% we can have control over outside of personnel but I would like us to stick to 5% because you never know what can happen with reimbursements, if you suddenly have fewer reimbursements, you could have some issues. Most of our control as far as reducing expenses are big ticket items that is out of our control which includes rent, utilities, about \$4 million, booking inner local about 9 million and maintenance costs and fuel, which you all and have watched the news goes up and down depending on what is going on in the global economy in terms of what is going on with wars in the middle east. It is very volatile. That cost, sometimes they go up, sometimes they go down.

Some of the we have tried to control our expenses but we don't want to cut short is uniforms and equipment supplies, travel, training. Our next budget slide shows the -- the year estimates last year. We estimated salaries and benefits, you will see we are pretty close in our projections and I am very happy about that. The salary and benefit category is offset by underrun and the expense refunds. We have more reimbursement over time and expense than our refunds, then refunds go up accordingly. We also had some savings and contractals and which was not a bad thing. One of the things that we have talked about to our people, even though we try to spend the budget you give us, we've also have been - - we have been pretty thrifty and try to put off as much as we can every year in what is in the budget to try to save money. 2011 Current year estimate is we -- when you work your way down the slide there, you will see that we really believe that we will probably come in a little over \$2 million in saves to the city over what we were budget and we are hopeful we can hold on to that. Salaries tend to be moving below budget due to vacancies but terminal pay is on track so far and also may fall further below depending on retirees and what happened with requirement between now and december 30th. Some of the costs for 2012 and some of the expenses, there, the cost drives, we are looking to adding 47 new officers including supply and equipment, which is about \$4 million to maintain cheaper staffing formula and we are looking at \$2 million forsworn officers in step increas longevity, that is criminal wall obligation and we are looking to get additional upgrades in positions and there is 21 of those that were added in fiscal year 2011. We also have one of the drivers is increases. For both sworn and civilian s from the dbb we brought to council a while ago and we don't see utility increases included in the forecast, if there is any increases in the utility. There is nothing included there. The other horizon issues is we want to continue to proactively respond to crime trends. It's something we have been working on through, working on addressing staff and load, we work with a support services with nonsworn. Their workload continues to grow. We continue to upgrade our technology. Which includes public safety cameras. Yesterday, you might have seen on the news, that we had another incident on sixth street. We are now scouring businesses to look at that but we are looking forward to hopefully by the end of the summer to have the first set of high quality cameras in the downtown area to help us combat crime and work on efficiencies and obviously maintaining a good vehicle fleet, to make sure we have reliable patrol

vehicles and service vehicles and our body armor and taser replacement, only a lifespan of five years, especially quality armor and capital improvement. Performance highlights for us, our goal in response time for urgent calls, we had set goal of 7 minutes 35 second and we had actual of 53 crime rate per thousand. 29 and we received 5 per thousand and property crime rate, our 35 and the actual was 60.02. Traffic fatality was per 3 and we are at 6.84. Again, that was a 16-year low in terms of total fatalities. We are proud of that and able to reduce property and violent crime last year. Focus group issues, better interpersonal skills. It is something we work on regular basis with our police officers. Sometimes they are pressed for time going from call to call and we really work on it a lot in terms of traffic enforcement, where we don't want them to act like you are just another number. We want them to sell the dict more. Our motors are going to get cameras this year, so they will be -- not that they aren't friendly but they may be even friendlier knowing they are on camera, that we will see increase -- better engagement with the community. It is always issue that folks want. They want the patrol officers to be able to get out and walk around and talk but obviously you all know what -- when you have calls stacked, you don't have time to get out and talk, and obviously an increased presence. The recommendations include identify and conduct appropriate officer training which we always have and are always ongoing and reinforce, not just through what the chief and commands staff but all of of our leadership know how important this stuff is to us and continue to implement effective outreach activities, which I think we are doing. Some of the police unmet needs, we are looking for 10 sworn positions which would include couple of lieutenants and 8 detectives. In the future we would like to add more resources to burglary unit to deal with the burglary issues. One of the issues we have in the future that we are looking is the stimulus money grant that went into the communications division expires this this year, and there will be no renewal and that is 8 call takers and 4 dispatcher positions, you will see the victim services positions are up there but we are feeling a little more comfortable. Our comfort is a little better on what is going on with some of those grant positions and we are hopeful that we will continue to receive the funding or that. I think one of the reasons we have the best victim services unit that just received the second place reward in national level, i think it was last year, one of the best in the country, so we get a lot of support for that. And all of these positions are really to keep up with current -- we need -- with the current challenge in the department. Staff psychologist is something we have been working on and talking about a while. We would like additional staff psychologist. Crime scene specialists are critical with burglary issues in the city and the crime analysts that deal with more of our intelligent policing and intelligence lead policing and contract compliance specialist. Obviously contracts can get people in trouble. We want to make sure we are doing it right. And forensic chemist, firearms and tool mark examiner. We did add a second one -- we are still looking to add a position there. Media services coordinator and 10 call takers, again, conversion of 8 temporary call takers to permanent. Increased firearms training and supplies. It is something that is important to me and we don't want our officers shooting once a year but monthly because the use of force is something critical to this city and the department. Another issue that occurred this year we recently lost clean up funding, the state eliminated it for clandestine labs and so it is something to look in the future and increase funding for training of police personnel and it is something we talk about all of the time. The and then the state funding for training and that's something that we may lose, we are still fighting capitol, trying to a maintain funding for police officer training. We haven't lost it but we are afraid that we may. Do you want me to keep going? Existing funded cip projects we are really proud of is public safety training center y'all were part of looking good. Northeast substation is funded but it is on hold right now. It is home depot, saint johns area, we are looking at. What we received and what we need may not match up and one of the conversations we are having with the city manager is we would rather do it right personally than do it not 100% and not meet our needs. So that is on hold right now. As you know the public safety center -- training center improvement included 23 million-dollar bond project passed in 2006 that replaced two buildings. We ended up with 50,000 square foot two story classroom, 38,000 square foot shooting range and it was completed 2010 of december and now in use and we all should be proud and the taxpayers should be proud of what they built. And again, we will see what happens with the joint use of municipal court and the police facility, home depo, it is on hold and we will see where it goes from there. The unfunded cip requests include a headquarters building. That building is kind of a menace to society. Don't use the elevators. Don't be surprised if i don't get stuck on the elevators, kind of comment when the media gets stuck. I laugh when that happens and I think it was karma. I want to go on the record. It was not intentional. It is a problem. Our elevators we have to notice employees that they are out of date and don't meet the

codes. People notice an issue, we are looking at central west station, move to the baker sector to eanes do you see the overcrowding and reduce footprint for new headquarters building, that 6 million issue, headquarters building 75 million-dollar issue. Northwest substation to deal with overcrowding -- do you want me to stop, mark?

I want to say something about the numbers you are throwing out. I don't want council or the public to latch on to the numbers. When we talk about the substation, when we talk about the district court which currently plan to be located in the same place, even when we talk about new headquarters, I think we have got issues with regard to all of those in terms of programming standpoint in terms of headquarters. We are going to be looking at a different kind of solution than a typical headquarters so I am offering caution about the numbers we are putting out because I want you to know that we are going to -- in many respects, wipe the slate clean and look for better solutions because the ones in play now -- this is my opinion -- aren't good solutions.

Thank you. Well, I am not going to throw out any more numbers then because -- the southwest substation, something we are looking at in the future as the city continues to grow, especially to the south, offer of the -- where the y is at over and it continues to grow and our response times become more of a challenge without a footprint there. The mounted patrol facilities, we have land and now we need to look at how we deal with the facilities that need to support the operation and the park patrol park ranger facility is an issue we need to look at in the future and have talked to parks to see how we can partner to see how we can actually do that together. Now our proposed reductions, we will propose delay the hiring of 47 new officer positions for six months. This will result in savings of approximately .839 million, which would put us into some time last year for a class and maybe towards the end of the first quarter. We really believe we can do that with minimal disruption to service and with minimal disruption to presence and our ability to keep people safe and the other area that we would look at reducing is 2 million, and over time. That would reduce our ability to -- to -- or mayhem per our ability to look at our hotspot initiatives, but I really feel confident that, as we continue to use data to -- to deplore our resources and use those over time dollars that we try to use as strategically, if we work with that reduction, it will be helpful and we have the support in the city, especially with this mayor and council and city management team, we can come back to you and show you the data, if it is becoming a problem we could hopefully get help. But I think we could make good use of our overtime and do it in a way that won't have an impact.

Mayor, council, city manager, michael mcdonald, 2 million in overtime. These are certainly tough times where we are asking every department to look at the reduction menu in the event, as we move through this process, what the -- what the decisions we would make and as the chief talked about a moment ago, a large percentage of their budget is personnel and so you start looking at some of those other areas, particularly with the other decisions we have had to make in past years. It becomes very tough to determine where you could come up with some of reductions that we may potentially take a look at. So with regards to overtime, one of the things the police department has done a great job at over the last couple of years is managing the overtime. When the chief came in, everybody remember the old 80% staffing that was in place and it was -- and, you know, it was headed in a direction that it should not have gone and the chief stepped in and decided to of staff where you needed it, not just, you know, not just putting a model out there and deciding that's the way we will do it. That substantially reduced the overtime and I think he's done a good job the last self years of looking in those areas. [One moment, please, for change in captioners]

Mayor Leffingwell: At any time will that result in us dipping below our manning 0 per one thousand population?

We could, but it would be negligible, the level that we would go under. Any time we have a 10% vacancy on patrol we will freeze all transfers to make sure we have those patrol assets available to respond to calls for service and to emergencies. So I think if it were to happen -- it would be negligible and we have a plan in place that we activated last year or the year before to hold transfers to keep

patrol fully operational.

Mayor Leffingwell: Liked to see the numbers, the actual retirement and see what the manning is throughout this delay period if it's ever implemented. And overtime I know you've done a good job on achieving efficiencies to reduce overtime, but there comes a point where you've trimmed away all the fat and you're working in the muscle and bone here. I want to be very cautious about that because it almost implies that if you have -- you have discretionary overtime. I want to make sure that we're not actually reducing public safety services in order to meet a budgetary constraint here by reducing police overtime. I want to make sure we're not undermanned out there at any point in time. I want to take a closer look at that as we go through this budget process. And I have stated, I'll just speak for myself, that i don't want to support any cuts in public safety that reduce the level of public safety provided. And so I'm going to be assured of that before signing off, me personally, on delaying the class and substantial reductions in overtime.

Mayor, I just want to add that in terms of your concern on vacancies, we will have an interim academy class to deal with vacancies outside of the 47. So we do have a a class in place that alice just reminded me of.

[Inaudible - no mic].

That's based on the population and the population as I understand it is midyear anyway. The calculation is midyear. So we're not -- we'll not really fall below the 200,000 if the calculation is as of midyear.

Mayor Leffingwell: As long as it's the calculation that we've historically used which -- whether you use the city demming on ralphfers population estimates. I also think that is what you would have to use. I want to make sure we're not adjusting the population numbers to make sure we have the manning formula, things like that. Mayor pro tem.

Martinez: On this last slide, chief, can you explain how we would delay a class for six months and reduce overtime? It seems like it would have the direct opposite effect that by not having officers to fill vacancy, they would have to be filled with overtime.

Well, part of it is the 47 are actually new positions based on the two per thousand. The class will help with the current vacancies, current positions to help us do that. One of the things we did in there is the hot spot initiative, which when we see an emerging hot spot we use the overtime to start knocking it down before it continues to grow. So I think that we will be in pretty good shape.

Great.

I hate this. It's embarrassing. I was telling chief mcdonald that it's embarrassing when I go to meetings with other chiefs around the country. We're so blessed to work here when you see what's going on around the country and police officers being laid off left and right. I'm very proud to be your police chief and I'm very proud to work in a city where the manager and mayor and council and the people of the city have made public safety such a top priority. It's hard for me to complain about these numbers when i see houston is getting ready to lay off 250 cops. That's really difficult. I really appreciate the support. Say again?

[Inaudible - no mic].

238 Firefighters and close stations.

Martinez: I do think -- I still had some questions.

Mayor Leffingwell: We do have to put that in per perspective with the rest of their budget constraints and you can't isolate it or take it out.

Martinez: On your first two slides I'm confused because as a source of funds you use asset fort captured as two percent and as then you use asset forfeiture funds at two percent. Can you explain that to me?

The asset forfeitures?

On one slide you use it as a source of funds and then on the next slide you use the same two percent as the use of funds. What do you spend asset forfeiture funds on?

It usually is spent on unmet needs that we have. For example, whether it's transitioning our firearm system to one weapon system where we all want to be -- our officers in uniform wearing the same caliber, same handgun.

Martinez: The confusion I guess was it looked to me like you spend two percent of your funds on asset forfeiture. What you're saying is you're spending the two percent you gain from asset forfeiture on other stuff.

That's correct. And we focus on unmet operational needs.

Martinez: Thank you.

Mayor Leffingwell: Kris?

Riley: Chief, I want to thank you for the presentation and for all the work you're doing. Just a few questions. First, over slide four where you have 2011 use of funds. It's at 24% and a few slides later where you have the 2012 cost drivers and major expenses assumptions, we also see a projected travis county booking increase in the amount of almost \$600,000. Chief mcdonald, I know you and I have talked a little bit about the options before us with respect to that expense. Can you bring us up to date and just provide the highlights? Or either one of you provide the highlights of what we're looking at in terms of managing that expense?

Yes. Certainly with regards to the contract that we have with the county, you know, the way the law works is prior to magistration the cost associated with a prisoner is our responsibility up until magistration. Many, many years ago we -- long ago when we operate the facility on seventh street we handled our own booking -- magistration procedures and then once they were magistrated before a judge we sent them over to travis county. We later -- the county was facing an overcrowding situation. They began to -- they contracted with the city to run our facility on seventh street while they were building the new travis county jail. And after opening that jail we had a decision point at that point where we could either -- we could either operate -- we could either continue our relationship with the county and have our magistration and everything done at the new facility that they built, the current facility, or we could open -- go back to the way things were before. We made decisions back during that time because of -- although we would have been opening our own facility in terms of the taxpayer it was a duplication when travis county, if we had a contract with them, we could get it accomplished. But what has happened over the years is that that contract has gone up substantially. And to the point to where just a couple of months ago the chief and I recently went down to visit the facility in san antonio. They actually perform their own magistration services. And then once magistrated they transfer the prison over to the county, so he and I went down and took a look at that as an option. So where we are at this point is we're negotiating with the county for, you know, moving forward for a new contract, but also we have -- we're looking in exploring our own options here as well where we can get to a point where we can make a recommendation to the city manager on which direction we should go. Certainly as a body

y'all have always been mindful of the overlapping tax rate and we want to make sure we look at that across the board for our citizens, but we also have to be aware if these costs continue to go up it reaches a point to where we can run that facility less if we operate it ourselves.

Riley: And you're looking at the -- at how other cities manage that expense in comparison with how the city of Austin does? And then obviously we want to make sure that we're in line with our peer cities in terms of that -- the burden that that places on the city.

Yeah. That and just making sure that what we're doing is -- makes sense because there's a lot that goes into that, not just the costs, but making sure we can efficiently get officers in, you know, get the processing portion of it done as quick as possible to get officers on the street as the city grows. So there's a lot that we have to consider there.

Appreciate your ongoing work on that. On the performance measure highlights, I notice that the performance measures we see here all relate to the actual crimes or Travis County fatalities. Having been out on the campaign trail for awhile, that's not the performance measures that I was hearing about that people were concerned about. What I heard about was concerns about things like follow-up rate. When somebody gets a burglary, the statesman ran a story about the follow-up rates, the percentage of people that actually get a visit when they report a burglary, things like that. Do we have any performance measures that focus on the department's response to reported crimes?

We actually have on our comp stat progress, and there's an open invitation, councilmembers, we have a performance measure that talks about clearance rates where our investigative units have to talk about their clearance rates. So we do have those measures internally. And the reason we have the crime rate is because the internal comp stat rate has an impact on our ability to reduce crime. So we don't have it as a public rate, but it does have an internal process for that. And that's something that we're continuing to expand on because we share concern.

And I know I heard you say something about that, hoping to provide the additional resources in terms of a burglary unit for the upcoming year. And would that have an impact on that performance measure?

Absolutely, yes. And right now we're doing some other things internally because we do have a state-of-the-art crime lab and we want to make sure that when we get a CODUS hit with DNA evidence that we are doing everything we can with that CODUS hit. So we are doing some internal things to make sure that we're using our resources effectively.

Riley: It would be helpful if at some point the council could see where we are in terms of those basic measures, like those reported in the paper about the things like -- the closure rates, the response rates, when somebody reports a burglary, see how current performance compares with past performance, where we're going with that and what needs to be done to make sure we're staying on track.

We can do that.

Riley: That would be helpful. And finally I wanted to ask about capital plans. On last couple of pages of the presentation, we talked about the capital improvement key issues and the unfunded CIP requests. Help me understand the big picture. Obviously there are a lot of capital needs. You've got buildings where the elevators don't work. What sort of planning process is in motion to evaluate the current facilities and make strategic decisions about where we're doing.

The city right now has a consultant team in the city that's been here for several weeks looking, visiting with all the city departments to put together a footprint and a strategic plan on capital improvement as a global capital improvement plan for the entire city, including all departments, not just the police department. So they have done -- they spent a lot of time with us, and I'm sure they did with our sister

agencies. And I think what you'll see in the upcoming months is a comprehensive plan put together with some professional help from experts to have a discussion about a potential bond issues for 2012. But that is in place.

And one other thing. Not just on the bond issue, but as large as this organization is, a lot of times historically we probably indicated too independent department by department in terms of facility needs. And so what the city manager is required us to do now is to take a comprehensive look at this, put a team together where we can look at it across the board because in some cases if one facility or area is being vie indicated, it is ideally for another area, but you could unbeknownst to you have another area for that same thing and no one be aware of t that's why it's so important to put that comprehensive plan together. Certainly it's not going to produce a solution for everyone, but it can certainly give us a better way of taking a look at things.

Riley: Okay. Great. Actually, I did remember one last thing I did mean to ask about. That was about gang activity. The public safety commission has been raising some concerns about increases in gang activity. I know there was some public concern raised by a recent incident on sixth street. Is that going to affect our budget considerations for the upcoming year?

No, I don't think so. If you look at gang activity it is an issue and a concern. You saw the shooting we had a couple of weekends on sixth street near 35, but i think that when you look at what we've done in terms of the hida, it comes with specific funding and some additional resources from the federal government and the partnerships that we're building with our federal partners, that will have a good effect on our ability to continue to fight the gangs. And more importantly the gangs are really about drugs and the criminal enterprises are involved in. So we've recently increased our ability to combat those through federal partnerships.

Riley: Thanks.

Spelman: Just a follow-up. First I just have a couple of questions. I know that there's only four of us left and it would be a real good time for us to take a break for lunch, but I just have a couple of questions so we can let you go. One is to follow-up on councilmember riley's performance measures. And one performance measure of which you ended tactfully do not cite because it would be to the detriment of all other departments is general customer satisfaction. Whenever we do a survey of our citizens, police, fire always show up in the top of the list. Those are the ones that people are very happy about. I wonder if we've ever thought about doing a customer satisfaction survey of victims or other people who call 911 to report crimes or other conditions to follow up and see how well do you believe you were served? How well do you believe the police department worked to be able to deal with this problem?

One of the things when we establish the risk management division a couple of years ago after I got here and one of the things that we're doing is -- that I'm putting into place this year that should be up and running by the end of the summer is what's called the command leadership profile. That requires the assistant chiefs or the assistant risk management to go into the different commands, interview employees, interview community members to look at how responsive that command structure is from the commander on down to the newest rookie on how they deliver services to the community that they serve for their area of responsibility. We do have a chand leadership profile process that I'm implementing by the end of the summer to get a good snapshot of what's going on in terms of employee and employee relations, in terms of how often employees see their commanders, how responsive the commander and his cadre to the community. So you will get a really good snapshot of what's going on and that will be an internal process that will be used by the chiefs to evaluate the different commanders and their personnel. Spell that sounds like an excellent --

Spelman: Sounds like an excellent idea. I'm sure you will get different answers as you talk to community leaders. We have the lists of people we see often. If you broaden that to include people who have cently

contacted the police department about something, I bet we would get slightly -- [inaudible].

Well, surveys. It's like a guy complaint and you want to know is this just -- if you want a snapshot of how they're treating other people you send out surveys. So we will be using that survey process as part of our process. And then we have our annual survey that we do with the community as well.

Spelman: Let me -- I look forward to seeing results of that. I'm happy that you're doing that. With respect to the increase in personnel, the whole 0 per thousand, of course, is a very rough cut rule of thumb function that we just didn't want our police complement to lag too far behind population. It was adopted in 1990's when our population was increasing very, very rapidly. And of course it's still increasing more rapidly than almost anywhere else in the country. It makes sense to have some kind of rule of thumb to make sure we don't lag too far. But the understanding behind that is -- the understanding behind that is if you have more people you will probably have more police work load. You will have more calls for service, more arrests, more traffic incidents you will have to deal with and things like that. And it's possible that that number -- those numbers come unstuck a little bit. You're talking about our crime rates have gone down. You didn't mention arrest rates, but I'm guessing that if the crime rates are down that probably the number of people we have to arrest has probably gone down a little bit too. I wonder whether or not our work load indicator in like calls for service have gone up as far as our population has.

We can look at that. It's also another piece that I think that you left out. There's gentlemennography. Our geography continues to grow and with that people want to see a police presence and the more the city grows the more challenging it is to have that police presence and more importantly the response times when your facilities are so so far away. That's why in our city we're talking about a new northwest and a southwest and to make sure we have resources there so they can respond a lot quicker. So we can look at that as well.

Spelman: Okay. I'd like to see more specific stuff on what's driving our work load, what is -- what is driving our need for having more police officers, particularly if you can tie that to the effects of delaying the academy class for six months. Because I think that really speaks to the mayor's concern about what would happen if we did make that delay.

But in all fairness on the six-month academy class, I don't think that we would have been able to have one. The budget year starts October 1. We probably couldn't have started one until about December anyway, even if we could have -- if you were to tell us today October 1, here's your money, go start your class, we wouldn't -- the nuts and bolts of it, we probably wouldn't be able to start one until probably early to mid December in all the fairness probably the first quarter, so three months in reality. It's six months away from the start of the budget year, but based on our ability to get it going, we have a class going through right now, and we're going -- we're looking at an interim class to deal with the vacancies. We probably wouldn't have been able to get it going until December. And my academy staff is adamant that they don't want huge classes. And so it's more of a three month delay.

The interim class for vacancies, that would be lateral transfers?

We're going to have a -- what we're doing right now, we're going to stop with lateral -- stop with lateral transfers -- we want to track this last class for a year or two to see the quality of the employee because, you know, there was a couple of folks -- cadets that were kind of interesting characters. I'm not saying that they're going to be a problem, but we want to make sure that using that system we want to just get a little bit more data on their performance because we may have some critics, but I always like to say that everything is about perspective in life. People that think we're bad departments because they've never been police bid a truly bad department. I believe we have a culture that's second to none. I've been here for four years and I really believe that. I want to make sure that this lateral class, that we track them for 18 to 24 months to get a feel for what kind of employees they turn out to be and then we'll go back to having lateral classes on a regular basis if it looks good.

Spelman: So the interim class is not lateral transfers, it's --

not this time. By the time we do in a year from now we'll hopefully have enough data on the last lateral class because my intent is moving forward is that on a huge -- on the big academy class it would be new hires that don't have -- that go through the whole process. And on the interim classes, our typically smaller classes that deal with backfilling the vacancies, we would use that for the laterals because it's a shorter class, it's a shorter training time frame and we get them up and running a lot quicker and you get the experience so you're using them to relays place those. We're looking at looking to do that next year.

Spelman: Sounds like a real good plan to be watching the laterals real carefully.

Yes, sir. We haven't had them for quite a few years.

Spelman: Last question. Generally the trend in the police department has been to increase sworn personnel, but not -- the increase in non-sworn personnel has been larger by and large. I know some police departments around the country they felt that the best way to get the best use out of the sworn personnel is to increase the support people. Are we -- are we approaching a point where we really need to have more non-sworn people to help out the sworn guys so that the sworn personnel can actually be used most effectively?

That's part of the budget request is really talking some about the support staff. Because when -- one of the reasons I'm -- we're putting the overtime in there is that the alternative would be to get rid of support staff because you know 90% of our budget, really 95%, 93 percent, is gone. We can't afford to get rid of that support staff that now I'm forced to take police officers offline and have them do the work. I would rather work on my efficiencies. We're a very efficient department and I'm confident that even though we reduce 2 million that we'll be able to continue to use our comp stat to really be surgical about how we spend -- comp stat really brings some intelligence into the way you're using data to spend the money. And that's why we can stretch that overtime dollar a little bit more. The alternative is to get rid of support staff, and we're not in support of that.

Spelman: We may very well be a dollar spent on support staff will buy us a lot more than a dollar spent on sworn personnel because we'll be using the sworn personnel more effectively.

The dollar gets.

Morrison: On the non-sworn side than the sworn side. I want to be able to keep the sworn folks free to go do police work. So we are looking at that and that's part of our budget.

Spelman: Got you. Thank you, chief.

Mayor Leffingwell: Any other questions? The interim class, how many and when does it start?

How many -- do you know, alice, how many are we looking at?

[Inaudible - no mic]. If practice If practice

I would say it would be in the low 20's. And we're looking at december.

Mayor Leffingwell: All right, thanks.

Thank you, sir.

Mayor Leffingwell: I guess next we have the fire department. I guess I have to make a determination of how many people are going to be here. 00 and I'm gone at 1:00. Councilmember spelman, what is your preference? Pell spell my preference is to take a short break, but 00 and we can deal with the fire department inside of the next hour maybe we should just press forward.

Mayor and council, the fire chief sends her regrets. She's actually at a hearing she's testifying today and so I'm here in her stead. To my right I have amy singer, our assistant director and she runs our financial shop. The first slide you is in front of you is a review of the financial data going back to the fy '10. Our cye was set at 117. Actually our year end was 7, so we had a delta of 1.7 million. For the 2011 budget or cye is projected to be on budget. Irk review of our performance measures for the past year. The fire department regarding our response time is running at 84 percent of our goal of 85. Incidentally for the first two quarters of this fiscal year we're actually running just a touch over about 86. So we've made some adjustments to that and in this fiscal year we'll be talking about that later. Our new performance measure in this next fiscal year will be zero. And we've got some programs in place to address that. The percent of cardiac arrests with return of spontaneous circulation after the application of cpe, our goal was 40, we're up to 41. Due to a couple of different modalities, if you will, the austin medical director had a new program that we've taken on called the pit crew model and it has to do with how we apply cpr and just an industry-wide change in the application of cpr and it's made a difference in our customers. And then of course the austin fire department on the customer survey, still at 90% satisfaction in the service that we're providing. The horizon issues that we see before you are the ones that you've seen in the past. We haven't changed very much in the horizon issues. Number one is sworn staffing. At this moment I'd just like to thank the mayor and council for your vision and support. We have three ladders left to achieve four person staffing and it's made a huge I will packet. If you'll recall back on april 17th we had the pin pell fire, the largest wildfire in travis county in 50 years. The austin fire department had nearly half their force out there. We saved over 150 homes that were in imminent danger and still handled all the other calls in the city. Certainly we had the -- we remember the echelon event, the cambridge tower fires and each time the fire department was able to answer belt and take -- answer the bell and take care of those issues and that's because of your support and your ability to keep us funded and moving in the right direction. I want to thank you for that. Non-sworn staffing, just like councilmember spelman had mentioned, as the department grows our non-sworn staffing has not grown and there's some significant efficiencies that we could achieve if we support that particular area. So that's an area of interest for us and it rises high on the horizon issues. Aging infrastructure as we spoke of earlier, the city's conducting a citywide facility assessment. The fire department is no different and we're involved in that. We have 45 staitionzs and a total of 42 work sites spread across the city. So that's a challenge for us. Over the last 13 years the fire department has -- actually over the last 15 years the fire department has built 13 stations. So while we've exponential growth and our attention has been there, certainly our infrastructure is the concern to us and we need to give that some care Fy '10. cye was set at 117. Actually our year end was 7, so we had a delta of 1.7 million. For the 2011 budget or cye is projected to be on budget. Irk review of our performance measures for the past year. The fire department regarding our response time is running at 84 percent of our goal of 85. Incidentally for the first two quarters of this fiscal year we're actually running just a touch over about 86. So we've made some adjustments to that and in this fiscal year we'll be talking about that later. Our new performance measure in this next fiscal year will be zero. And we've got some programs in place to address that. The percent of cardiac arrests with return of spontaneous circulation after the application of cpe, our goal was 40, we're up to 41. Due to a couple of different modalities, if you will, the austin medical director had a new program that we've taken on called the pit crew model and it has to do with how we apply cpr and just an industry-wide change in the application of cpr and it's made a difference in our customers. And then of course the austin fire department on the customer survey, still at 90% satisfaction in the service that we're providing. The horizon issues that we see before you are the ones that you've seen in the past. We haven't changed very much in the horizon issues. Number one is sworn staffing. At this moment I'd just like to thank the mayor and council for your vision and support. We have three ladders left to achieve four person staffing and it's made a huge I will packet. If you'll recall back on april 17th we had the pin pell fire, the largest wildfire in travis county in 50 years. The austin fire department had

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As we talk about growth we have significant number of fire apparatus out there and equipment and maintenance and control of all that. It continues to be an issue. We want to be good stewards of the tax dollars and the issues that we've been given. Looking at unmet service demands going forward, as i spoke of earlier, the zero fire death initiative is an initiative that chief kerr has pushed forward. Her vision is why would any fire death be acceptable. And we should be at zero. And based on that, we've really tried to look at areas where we could be proactive within our inspection, code enforcement, and prevention areas. Also within public education. Those are areas where we could be proactive instead of react active to the incident. The additional internal controls and support personnel, kind of what i spoke of earlier, with all of the wide geographic areas of the department and the many pieces of equipment we have, that's an area where support personnel would make a significant impact on care of all of that. Planning and research, in response from a growth, we have about 20 fire protection agreements. We partner with about 14 esd's. We estimate the population doubling in the next 20 to 30 years based on the 2010 census. And so the annexation of areas around the city, the delivery of fire service to those areas is a concern for us and it's something we need to pay attention to. Also the resurgence of muds. As y'all are aware of, there's been a real change recently in development and muds are becoming a new process that -- not a new process, but one new as of late. They were prevalent in the past. Lastly our compliance -- not lastly, but second to the last, compliance with state regulations regarding inspections of personal protective equipment. The state in 2008 mandated that all fire departments would be compliant with the national fire protection association standard 1851, which essentially says that our turnout gear, our fire fighting gear has a absolute shelf life of 10 years and that anything over three years of age has to have a significant inspection and advanced inspection. So what that means is that we can't have equipment on firefighters that's older than 10 years of age and anything more than three years of age has to have this advanced inspection, which requires taking the garment apart and doing some really in-depth inspections. That's going to -- we need to make sure that they're performing inspections to meet the mandate. There's going to be a cost to that. And lastly our formal firefighter professional development beyond our basic cadet training. The training becomes more complex and it's important that we're professionally educated and prepared to meet the upcoming demands. Our last slide, our eight potential budget reductions, just to kind of group these to give you a frame of reference, four of them are from areas of operation and maintenance. Again, with similar departments the majority of our budget is personnel. So the the areas where we could look for making reductions are these particular areas, so as i said previously, the -- four of them are in the areas of operations and maintenance. Two of them are from fire prevention and public education. I know that's somewhat die cot must with what I just for spo about with our out region reach and the public education areas are areas that we need to increase. However, if we're faced with reductions those are areas where we can do that. And continue to keep the trucks rolling on the street. And lastly the initiatives of the department. And I'll be glad to speak to those in more detail. If the mayor

and council have questions.

Mayor Leffingwell: This is more a comment than a question. Yesterday we commemorated the 30th anniversary of the memorial day floods here in austin, which I think 13 people lost their lives. There's a lot of property damage and so forth, almost 40 million dollars' worth. And one of the comments made out there and pictures were shown to verify was all the firefighters and emergency responders that were out there were basically dressed like you are right now in responding to this emergency. So we made a lot of progress in the last 30 years thankfully.

We have indeed.

Martinez: Mayor? We also lost firefighter james buford during the memorial day floods, and definitely don't want to lose the significance of commemorating the ultimate sacrifice that he made that day. But I wanted to go through this and ask a couple of questions. First of all, congratulations. Seems like things are doing very well at the fire department. Our response times, we're hitting our goals with response times. Our room of origin goals are being met. Since we're talking about ppe and the expense of it and the requirements that come with it, I'm going to ask some questions. But this obviously is dated because this is what i recall. From when I was in the fire department. But there were new programs coming online when I was leaving. When I left the department, at that time we had like light duty firefighters that were injured and recovering. They were taking our gear and washing it and we had to buy these washing machines and they were inspecting it. But there were some proposals from some equipment companies that said let's do like this lease maintenance program where you don't buy the equipment out right. We provide it to you and then we'll go pick it up and we'll inspect it and we'll maintain it. And we just kind of pay this monthly lease, if you will. Is that something that we've contemplated as a cost savings measure?

We've looked at it, but weren't able to realize any real cost savings from it. Part of the issue is with the -- some of the challenges with the lease were that we felt like we could have lower entry level fees in our ppe. So we sort of steered away from the leases because they saturated out with big jumps of money that you had to front load into it. And possibly over the course of time you may have saved some money, but we really didn't feel like we could at that time. And this was prior to the 2008 mandate that the state had put upon us. So really what we had in place and still do to this day a very robust system of washing and caring for this equipment that keeps our folks safe inside of a house fire. And to this day we believe that it's still that safe. The driver for this is that unfunded mandate from state that we comply with 1851.

Martinez: Sure. Since you mentioned it, the pinnacle fire, I wanted to just ask what we've done since the pinnacle fire. I know that we sought some solicitations from folks to come in and help us, i guess, create a program or a message. Did that happen or are we moving in that direction?

After the pin pell fire we reached out to a number of people in the industry and certainly worked within the department so we could be responsive to what occurred. We resurrected the 2003 study that we did about the wild urban interface and we went back to some of those processes that we had used in the past. Within two weeks we had designed, developed and brought on -- received in the department 30,000 door hangers. And every night since that night we've had fire engines out on particular areas of the community where the interface happens and every weekend we have an outreach to community where we're hanging door hangers on doors, we're talking to residents about the wild land urban interface and the actions they can take to better protect themselves. In addition to that we developed a flyer in english and spanish that we're also handing out nightly and then on the weekends. We really wanted to push hard while we had the opportunity, while it was fresh on people's minds and take advantage of what was a significant event. What we saw was back in 2003 and 4 as we began to push this message, the interest of the community wasn't there. And by virtue of that and the fact that it was raining a lot, it became less of an issue. When this occurred we pushed hard, we have put firefighters out in the community talking about the problems and trying to answer questions. We'll continue to do

that. We've had a number of town hall meetings. And I believe there's another one this week. And we'll continue to do that through the summer as well.

Martinez: Great. Can you update me on the women's facilities in fire stations and have we met the goal that we set out to create enough separate restroom facilities for women in the fire stations and all of our fire stations?

We continue to work at that. We're not where we want to be. We're in the design process of phase 5. We've had a number of interactions with the association. They had concerns about some of the previous phases. Phases 1 through 3. Actually, 1 through 4. We met with them, the chief encouraged us to take those concerns seriously. We did. We're making adjustments to that as we speak. Right now phase 4 is partially built, partially executed. There are areas where some of them are complete and some are them aren't. By and large I would say that there's relative satisfaction from the workforce about the progress we're making. It's never fast enough. But they're satisfied we're doing that.

Martinez: Thank you, chief. I appreciate that. On your last slide as a potential budget reduction, you have hiring only lateral firefighters. Is that savings due to the diminished length of the training academy?

Yes, sir. It's the processing time is less for the laterals and the training academy is less. So there's a savings there.

Martinez: Last question. When we're looking at efficiencies, one of the things that has come up is some residents, city of austin residents, that are in the city park road area where they have an esd station literally 30 seconds from their home, but when they call 911 we send engine or ladder 31, I believe it is, on 2222, and it's like a 13 to 15 minute response time when they have a fire station that is, you know, three blocks away. Why are we not looking at efficiencies in terms of automatic aid agreements like we have in other areas of the county where that travis county esd could at least initiate is response while engine and ladder 33 are responding to those areas?

We have -- one of the bullets that I alluded to previously, the relationships with our county partners, and that particular situation we have an ongoing conversation going on with that esd. Some of the values that we have regarding -- is when an austin fire engine rolls up on the scene for a citizen, there's a certain expectation of service that the individuals, the firefighters are equipped and trained and certified and staffed? A certain manner. That's what the citizens are paying for. We want to make sure if we're in an agreement with another esd and we're going to trade services auto aid that regardless of who shows up on the scene that they be similarly trained, equipped and staffed. Some esd's because of the economic challenges aren't able to do that. So we're cautious about entering into agreements where there may be a disparity in our ability to deliver service. So that's an ongoing discussion with some of them and the ones that you spoke of, sir, are one of those ones -- one of the esd's that we're having that discussion. We're not dismissing it out of hand. We're looking for ways to collaborate. The bottom line is that the citizen gets the fastest possible service that's out there and we want to make sure we can do that.

Martinez: I certainly do understand and appreciate the concerns about similarly trained and equipped standards. To me a disservice would be no service at all, which that's what happens now. At least for the first 15 minutes they get no service. And if you're in a life-threatening situation and especially in a cardiac event, obviously the key is rapid intervention. And in those cases I don't see -- if you're a trained eca, not even an emt, you know how to do cpr. And so to me I just hope we can work those minor issues out and provide the best service to the citizens as we do everywhere else in the city because I think in that area of town there are some concerns that the response times are very lengthy. [One moment, please, for change in captioners]

it could be. What would be the practical effect of limiting recruiting activities to the local area?

Essentially what it would be is that the -- the travel and marketing outside of the local austin area would be curtailed. That is an initiative of the department that -- that -- that we could -- that we have to cut back on. I think what happens is, though, we lose opportunity to really reach out to some talent and outside of just -- just the central texas area, and that is really the down fall of it, it's not certainly where we want to go, but if we're going to try to develop some reductions, that may be a place that we have to go with this --

involved in this reduction in our advertising, outside the local area, or only in our recruiting trips?

It would be our advertising outside the local area, and all aspects outside the local area. What we essentially say is that we would only be recruiting in the central texas area.

Recruitment is not sending out a recruiting. It's also putting a notice in the newspaper.

Absolutely and all the other things that would go through that.

I would imagine -- roughly what percentage of our current recruits come from outside central texas?

Is there -- one of the things you're much more aware of than i am is the need for increasing the amount of racial ethnic diversity inside the fire department. Would our curtailing the amount of recruiting outside of the local area have any appreciable effect on diversity inside of our recruit class?

Right now we're in the process of looking at our most recent recruiting program, and that's -- those are - - those are numbers that we're working at getting. I couldn't tell you definitively one way or the other, but intuitively, we believe it's important that we reach out to areas just outside of central texas.

Okay. The answer, as far as you can tell right now, is, yes, it would have an appreciable effect and that's a good argument. I felt strongly about having a lot of different kinds of folks in the fire department that i might not want us to do this.

That's correct, sir.

Okay. I look forward to hearing more about that once you've actually had a chance to put a pencil to it. Similarly hiring lateral firefighters, I can think of good reasons for hiring laterally. I can think of good reasons for not hiring laterally. The police chief identified. He didn't mention any names but suggested there were a few characters that you might get a few more of the lateral transfers than if you're hiring recruits. That could be good or bad from the your point of view, is there a particular benefit to hiring laterally to firefighters or a particular cost.

I think right now just the short-term benefit is that -- that the turn around is quicker with the lateral so that equates to less dollars. This is our first -- our first go at it, and so like the police department, we'll be evaluating that as we go forward.

Sure.

But we think it's certainly meritorious and we should continue to look at it, after we do this lateral class, we hope to do one, and after we do it, we'll conduct the same analysis.

This is a lateral class, you really don't have any experience base here.

Exactly.

Got ya'. Well, it's -- okay, I'll leave it at that. Finally, if you were to reduce your public education efforts by 25%, what public education efforts would you in fact be reducing and what consequences might there be for that?

The -- the pub-ed office is staffed with four folks and what this reduction is essentially a reduction of one fte, one uniform personnel out of that office, because we have a number of vacancies, it wouldn't result in a reduction of a particular individual, but -- or a vacant position, if that's -- that's what that reduction would be. Once again, the -- what happens is our -- our ability to continue to push programs like we did after the pinnacle fire would be somewhat reduced because we have less folks there doing it. Again, not necessarily where we want to be, but if we're going to look for areas to make reductions, this is an area where we could and it wouldn't affect the trucks on the street at least initially.

It wouldn't affect trucks on the street.

Yes, sir.

I'm trying to understand. But you're also talking a few minutes ago, trying to prevent fires from happening, reduce the likelihood of a fatality if a fire does take place. Are those activities largely done by pub-ed, or are those activities largely done by firefighters in the companies or what.

The pub-ed group handles some of our day-to-day community outreach which is beyond the scope of what our on duty engines can do. Our on duty engines conduct a lot of -- you know, conduct those kind of outreaches, our pub-ed folks are more pointed toward schools, the highrise communities, the residential high rises, things of that nature. As we -- as we draw that down, just less interactions with the types of the public that we're going to be reaching out to.

Roughly, what percentage of all of our public education is handled by the people at the public education office as opposed to stuff you were talking about a minute ago.

I don't know that off the top of my head, sir.

We would have to look at that, yeah. We can get you that, though.

25% Reduction in public education efforts looks really, really dire, given your goal of reducing fatalities to zero for example or reducing a number of fires, generally. On the other hand, if this isn't really a 25% reduction in total public education, it might be half that or a smaller percentage even to that if a lot of the public education is being done by the firefighters of the companies as you were suggesting.

Yes, sir, that's correct. It would be a 25% reduction the output of that office.

Okay. If you could check on that for me, I would like to understand what the consequences of this are.

Thank you, mayor.

Other questions? Mayor, one comment that I thought was important, in the last presentation with the police department, the interim class discussion that we got into, the interim class is actually going to begin in August, they moved the date back from December, it will begin in August and it will have 40 people in it.

We do have a class in August and that should have --

yeah.

-- Filled that gap, hopefully. I just -- I have to comment on the goal of six desks, also, and I'm glad you brought it up. I know -- I know it's not meant that way, but the optics of it are kind of like what happens if we don't make our six desks, are we going to have to increase the number, so maybe we can find a different way of expressing that. We don't have to have a goal of a number of desks, minimize loss of life would be a good general statement. Agreed, sir.

Any other comments on -- for the fire department or questions? If not, thank you very much, and I've been led to believe that we're going to lose our quorum in about three minutes, we'll have to adjourn the meeting. But we do have three minutes to address any other item on the agenda, if anyone would like to. Bill?

Any questions --

they were asking someone who measures time in 90 minute intervals as professors do, to confine their comments to three minutes, perhaps I might hold over any comments that I have until thursday.

Okay. All right. no more questions. With that objection, we stand adjourned at 12:26.